

➤ Leave No Trace!

Make a commitment to protect the wilderness even if it means sacrificing convenience. It isn't difficult, especially with a little planning. Regulations are strictly enforced.

Before your trip

- Weapons, pets, and motorized or wheeled vehicles and equipment are prohibited in national park backcountry.
- Collecting any natural or cultural specimens or artifacts is prohibited. To collect natural specimens for scientific study, apply in advance for a permit from the parks' Resources Management Division.
- Plan meals and pack to minimize trash. Eliminate unnecessary packaging. Don't carry glass. Foil does not burn and plastic emits toxic fumes when burned. Remember, you must carry out all trash and unused food.

On the trail

- Shortcutting switchbacks is prohibited. Staying on trails prevents further erosion and preserves vegetation. Do not build rock trail markers or cairns. Avoid widening trails; walk through, not around, muddy spots.
- Never smoke while on the move. When smoking, clear a small area to mineral soil and crush ashes out there before leaving. Cigarette butts and matches are litter; pack them out! Smoking may be prohibited if fire danger is extreme.
- Hikers should yield right-of-way to pack and saddle stock, for everyone's safety. Step off the lower side of the trail and stand still. If the trail is too narrow and steep, walk back to a wider spot. Speak to the group as they approach to avoid surprising stock.

Around camp

- Camp on bare ground, never on vegetation of any kind. Do not camp in meadows. Select a previously used campsite unless it violates other guidelines. Always camp at least 100' from water, which may require scouting for a site. Avoid camping beneath snags or overhanging dead branches. When possible, pick a site that is screened from trails and other campers.
- Campsite "improvements," such as construction of rock walls, new fire rings, trenches, or bough beds, are prohibited.
- Keep food secure from wildlife at all times. See page 7 for information on proper food storage.
- Leaving any litter anywhere desecrates the wilderness and is inconsiderate of your fellow travellers. Carry extra bags to pack out trash, including that left behind by others. Never bury trash as animals will dig it up. Never dispose of trash in outhouses.



➤ Campfire Regulations

Campfires are prohibited in some areas due to fragile soil and scarcity of wood. Where fires are permitted, use only existing fire rings and do not add rocks. Clear surface duff from inside fire ring. Use dead wood gathered from the ground; don't chop or break branches off standing trees. Avoid using firewood over four inches in diameter, as it is rarely completely consumed. Axes and saws leave scars on downed logs; avoid using them.

Keep fires small, in a safe area, and away from overhanging limbs. Extinguish fires 1/2 hour before leaving; add water and stir the ashes. Do not add dirt, as this fills the fire ring. Never leave fires unattended.

You are responsible for knowing the fire regulations where you travel. Determine if you will need a stove and fuel. As stoves cause less damage than wood fires, their use is encouraged.

Restrictions on fires may increase during drought conditions, common in summer.

Wood fires ARE permitted in:

- Kaweah River drainage below 9000'. Exception: fires are prohibited in Hamilton Lakes Basin and Mineral King Valley above the ranger station.
- Kern River drainage below 11,200'. Exception: fires are prohibited at:
 - Little Claire Lake within 1200' of the lake;
 - Little Five Lakes above 10,400';

- Lower Soldier Lake within 1200' of the lake;
- Milestone Creek basin and Kern headwaters above 10,400' (north of Milestone Trail junction)
- Miter Basin above 10,800';
- New Army Pass Trail above 10,800' (fires permitted at the camp at the junction of the New Army Pass and Rock Creek trails);
- Nine Lakes Basin and upper Big Arroyo drainage above 10,000';
- Pinto Lake;
- Summit Lake;
- Tyndall Creek crossing of the John Muir Trail, within 1200' of the crossing;
- Tyndall Creek frog ponds within 1200' of the ponds;
- Wright Creek drainage above 10,800';
- Wallace Creek drainage above Waterfall Meadow;
- Wallace Creek Crossing on the JMT within 1200' of the food locker;
- Crabtree Meadow on the PCT within 1200' of the food locker;
- Crabtree Ranger Station Meadow within 1200' of the food locker.
- Kings and San Joaquin River drainages (all of Kings Canyon Park) below 10,000'. Exception: fires are prohibited in Granite Basin and Redwood Canyon.



➤ Campsite Restrictions in the Parks

■ Use only designated campsites at:

- Bearpaw Meadow
- Paradise Valley
- Pear Lake
- Emerald Lake

If sites are taken you will have to continue on to another area.

■ Length-of-stay limits apply at:

- Charlotte Lake 2 nights
- Hamilton Lakes 2 nights
- Kearsarge Lakes 2 nights
- Rae Lakes 2 nights per lake
- Paradise Valley 2 nights in valley

- Redwood Canyon 2 nights

■ Closed to all camping:

- Bullfrog Lake
- Mosquito Lake #1
- Timberline Lake

■ Special regulations apply at:

- Eagle Lake — No camping between the trail and lake.
- Hockett Meadow — No camping between the trail and Whitman Creek.
- Little Claire Lake — No camping within 100' of the lake.

➤ Backcountry Sanitation Is Important

To enjoy your visit and stay healthy, be aware that you can acquire a variety of diseases in the wilderness due to improper hygiene and/or water treatment. For additional information, check www.nps.gov/public_health/inter/backcountry/bc.htm on the Internet.

Water Quality

The incubation period for the intestinal parasite Giardia is 6 to 15 days after ingesting contaminated water. Symptoms include nausea, abdominal cramps, flatulence, lethargy, diarrhea, and weight loss. Stool cultures are required to make positive diagnosis. The disease may persist for weeks or months if untreated.

- Lakes and streams can be contaminated even if they look and taste pure. The most certain treatment to make water safe to drink is to boil for one minute with an additional minute for every 1000 feet in elevation.

■ Filtration lets you carry less fuel for boiling. Choose a filter with a pore size less than 0.5 micron. This removes harmful bacteria and protozoa, including giardia. Viruses and some bacteria can pass through filters, but they are not considered a common problem in mountain water. To be 100% safe, treat filtered water with a chemical disinfectant.

■ Chemical disinfectants such as iodine or chlorine tablets are not as reliable as heat in killing giardia. Use chemical disinfectants in conjunction with a filtration system.

Wilderness Hygiene

Poor hygiene in the backcountry spreads giardia and other diseases. Anyone can unknowingly carry a disease which could be passed on.

Washing hands before eating or preparing food to

prevent fecal contamination is just as important as treating water. (Remember: even biodegradable soaps pollute. Carry water at least 100' from streams and lakes before washing.)

Waste Disposal

The potential health hazard from human waste is increasing as more people visit the backcountry. To prevent the spread of disease, dispose of body wastes properly.

- Bury feces completely at least 6" deep, and at least 100' from lakes, streams, trails, and campsites. Studies show that buried intestinal pathogens can live for years, but complete burial reduces the chance that wildlife or insects will contact the waste and transmit disease.

- Please carry out your used toilet paper and dispose of it properly.